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ABSTRACT

In March of 1984, a total of 55,771 New Mexico public school students in grades 3, 5, and 8 were tested with the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) as required by the statewide standardized testing program. This document reports scores as national percentile ranks, and indicates the position of New Mexico students compared to a national sample of students. Scores are reported in 14 categories for each grade tested. Test results show that out of a total of 42 scoring categories for all three grades tested, 41 categories were at or above the national norm. In grade 3, the percentile rank scores in all fourteen categories were up from the previous year, and scores for grade 5 were higher in nine categories. Scores for grade nine increased in eleven categories. The appendix provides a summary of percentile scores in grades 3, 5, and 8 based on student's ethnicity, dominant language, and involvement in bilingual education programs. All of the percentile rank scores listed for Hispanic, Native American, and Black students were equal to or greater than the scores achieved by these ethnic groups in the previous year. (LMO)

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# NEW MEXICO STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAM REPORT

## 1983 – 1984 SCHOOL YEAR

Evaluation, Testing, and Data Management Unit
New Mexico State Department of Education
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501-2786

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# NEW MEXICO

# STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAM

# 1983-84

Prepared by
Jack McCoy

Evaluation, Testing, and Data Management Unit
New Mexico State Department of Education
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501-2786

November 1984

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March of 1984, a total of 55,771 New Mexico public school students in grades 3, 5, and 8 were tested with the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) as required by the statewide standardized testing program. The CTBS is designed to measure achievement in the academic basic skills of reading, spelling, language, mathematics, reference skills, science, and social studies.

In this document, scores are reported as national percentile ranks. They indicate the position of New Mexico students compared to a national sample of students (norming group). For example, the percentile rank score of 61 listed as the math total for third graders (Figure 1, Page 8) indicates that New Mexico's third grade students scored higher in this area, on the average, than 61% of the students in the national norming group.

Overall, the results of the 1983-84 statewide testing program for New Mexico are very encouraging. Scores are reported in 14 categories for each grade tested. Out of a total of 42 scoring categories for all three grades tested, 41 categories were at or above the national norm, which is the 50th percentile.

In grade 3, the percentile rank scores in all 14 categories are up from the 1982-83 test scores for New Mexico third graders. Scores in grade 5 were higher in nine categories than in 1982-83 while grade 8 scores increased in 11 categories as compared to the previous year's statewide scores.

The Appendix provides a summary of percentile scores in grades 3, 5, and 8 based on the student's ethnicity, dominant language, and involvement in bilingual education programs. It should be noted that all of the percentile rank scores listed for Hispanic, Native American, and Black students are equal to or exceed the scores achieved by these ethnic groups in the previous year's statewide testing.

## INTRODUCTION

New Mexico public schools strive to develop in each student a set of skills, abilities, and attitudes which will be of use to the student throughout life. Central to this purpose, our schools work to enhance student achievement in areas such as reading, language, mathematics, reference skills, science, and social studies. Each year, the New Mexico State Department of Education, through the Evaluation, Testing, and Data Management Unit, undertakes an objective assessment of student skills in these areas. This assessment is accomplished through the implementation of a statewide standardized achievement testing program which uses the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) to test students each spring. The standardized testing program is intended to provide an objective overview of the extent and nature of student achievement in these critical content areas. The testing program provides parents, students, and educators with assessment information which can be used to enhance the future achievement of our students and the future performance of our schools.

The 1983-84 standardized testing program was conducted between March 13 and March 29, 1984. All students enrolled in grades 3, 5, and 8 were administered the CTBS Form U. All public school districts were required to administer the reading, language, spelling, mathematics, and reference skills portions of the exam. Most districts also administer the science and social studies content area tests. A total of 55,771 students were tested including 18,617 at grade 3; 18,618 at grade 5; and 18,536 at grade 8.

In this report, percentile ranks are used when discussing test results. Raw score data are utilized to determine this measurement. Percentile ranks are a relative measure--they indicate a student's relative position in a group, in terms of the percentage of students scoring below him/her. Percentile ranks do not represent

the number of items answered correctly by the student. The national average (norm) is the 50th percentile, where half the students have scores above the 50th percentile, and half have scores below.

The purpose of this report is to provide a general overview of the CTBS testing results for all New Mexico students who completed the examination. The Appendix provides information in greater detail by total group and ethnic subgroups for the three grade levels. In reviewing the information presented in this report, one should remember that the data represent a sample of student performance in key subject areas taken by a single measure at only one point in time. As such, the reader is cautioned to recognize the limitations inherent in these test results and to note that these data address a limited subset of the goals and objectives toward which New Mexico schools strive.

## STATEWIDE STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAM

### Overview

The New Mexico statewide testing program was started during the 1971-72 school year when all public school students enrolled in grades 5 and 8 were administered the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills published by CTB/McGraw-Hill. During the 1975-76 school year, the program was expanded to include testing of grade 11 students. During the 1982-83 testing year, grade 3 testing was added to the testing program and grade 11 testing was made a local option. The testing program has been conducted each spring with district scores reported to parents, students, and schools prior to summer recess. Over the years, various forms of the CTBS have been used, with new forms replacing old forms as the new forms became necessary. The most recent changes in the form of the CTBS used occurred between the 1980-81 and 1982-83 school years. During the 1980-81 school year, the CTBS Form S was administered. The 1981-82 testing program used CTBS Form U Level G at grade 5, Level H at grade 8, and Form S Level 4 at grade 11. In 1982-83 Form U Level E at grade 3 was made a part of the statewide testing program; Level G at grade 5, and Level H at grade 8 remained the same; and grade 11 testing was made optional.

The change from CTBS Form S to CTBS Form U was undertaken to update and improve the information gained from the testing program. Form S of the exam was developed and normed in 1973 based on curricula content, students, and assessment technology available at that time. The content, norm groups, and assessment technology used in the 1981 development of Form U provides more timely, more valid, and more useful information. This change, however, is not without its disadvantages, as a change to the new Form U at grades 5 and 8 results in scores which are not directly comparable to scores resulting from the administration of Form S.

For the 1983-84 testing year, each New Mexico school district was required to administer the reading, spelling, language, mathematics,

and reference skills content area tests to all students enrolled in grades 3, 5, and 8. Most districts supplement this partial battery with the science and social studies content area tests to provide a full battery of scores at the required grade levels. Statewide scoring and reporting services were provided by CTB/ McGraw-Hill under contract with the New Mexico State Department of Education. All tests were administered between March 13 and March 29, 1984.

The CTBS Form U

The Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills Form U was published by CTB/McGraw-Hill in 1981. The Form U batteries follow the general format of CTBS Form S as a norm-referenced, standardized achievement series designed to provide basic skills assessment information related to broad content areas commonly found in state and district elementary and secondary school curricula. These content areas include: reading, spelling, language, mathematics, and reference skills to form the basic battery; and science and social studies to form the complete battery.

The CTBS Form U is a series of ten test batteries, with each test battery appropriate in content and difficulty level for use with a narrow range of students, usually students in one grade or in two adjacent grades. The ten batteries, or levels as they are frequently called, span the range between kindergarten and grade 12. Level E is appropriate for testing grade 3 students, Level G for grade 5 students, and Level H for grade 8 students.

Each Form U battery is composed of a number of tests; for a complete battery which assesses seven content areas, ten tests are used. Some of the content areas (spelling, reference skills, science, and social studies) require only one test to adequately assess that content area. The other content areas (reading, language, and mathematics) require two tests for adequate coverage. When two tests are needed to cover a content area, the scores from the two tests used are combined to produce a total score (i.e., a

total reading score is derived by combining scores from the reading vocabulary and reading comprehension tests). Scores for each test and each content area are provided. Additionally, a total battery score is provided by combining scores from the reading, language, and mathematics content areas. A description of each content area test is provided below.

CTBS Form U Test Content

Test 1 - Reading Vocabulary
Measures an understanding of same meaning of words, multiple meaning of words, unfamiliar words in context and meaning of affixes.

Test 2 - Reading Comprehension
Measures comprehension of reading passages through the ability to extract details, analyze characters and events, identify main ideas, draw conclusions and differentiate between writing techniques and forms of writing.

Test 3 - Spelling
Measures application of correct spelling in context of stimulus sentences. This test has been separated from the previous language test and requires selection of correct vs. incorrect spelling of words.

Test 4 - Language Mechanics
Measures skills in the use of correct capitalization and punctuation by editing the context of passages presented in various formats.

Test 5 - Language Expression
Measures proofreading skills in language usage and structure through critical review of presented passages. Items emphasize writing-related skills including combining sentences, selecting and developing topic sentences, and writing for a specific purpose.

Test 6 - Mathematics Computation

Measures skills in the computational operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and through the use of whole numbers, decimals, fractions, integers, algebraic expressions, exponents, and percents.

Test 7 - Mathematics Concepts and Applications

Measures understanding of mathematical concepts in problem-solving which includes numeration, number sentences, number theory, measurement, and geometry.

Test 8 - Reference Skills

Measures skills in finding and using information related to the use of parts of books, the dictionary, library skills, and the application of consumer skills.

Test 9 - Science

Measures understanding of scientific language, concepts, and information related to the areas of biology, botany, zoology, chemistry, and physics.

Test 10 - Social Studies

Measures understanding of concepts and generalizations related to the physical environment, the social environment, the political and economic environment, and history.

# THIRD GRADE RESULTS

## THIRD GRADE TESTING RESULTS

This was the second year in which third grade students throughout the state were tested as a requirement of the New Mexico statewide testing program. Between March 13 and March 29, 1984, a total of 18,617 grade 3 students were tested using CTBS Form U, Level E.

The test battery assesses basic skill achievement in the curriculum content areas of word attack, reading, spelling, language, mathematics, science, and social studies. The results of this assessment are presented graphically in Figure 1, where average scores for New Mexico's third grade students are expressed in national percentile.

The reader will note that, while there are only ten tests in the battery, 14 different scores are reported. This is because in the content areas of reading, language, and math, two scores are combined to produce total content area scores. Additionally, a total battery score is provided by combining scores from reading, language and mathematics content areas. These total scores appear as the red bars on the graph in Figure 1.

In grade 3, only the reading vocabulary score at the 48th percentile fell below the national norm. Other test scores in grade 3 range between the 50th (spelling) and the 67th percentile (math computation). Students in grade 3 score particularly well in the content area of mathematics, with a percentile rank score of 61%.

Figure 2 presents the percentile rank scores for the state's third graders for the past two years. Scores have increased in reading, language, and math and the total battery score in 1983-84 was 57% compared to 54% for 1982-83.

FIGURE: 1
STATEWIDE 1983-84 THIRD GRADE CTBS FORM U SCORES
EXPRESSED IN NATIONAL PERCENTILES

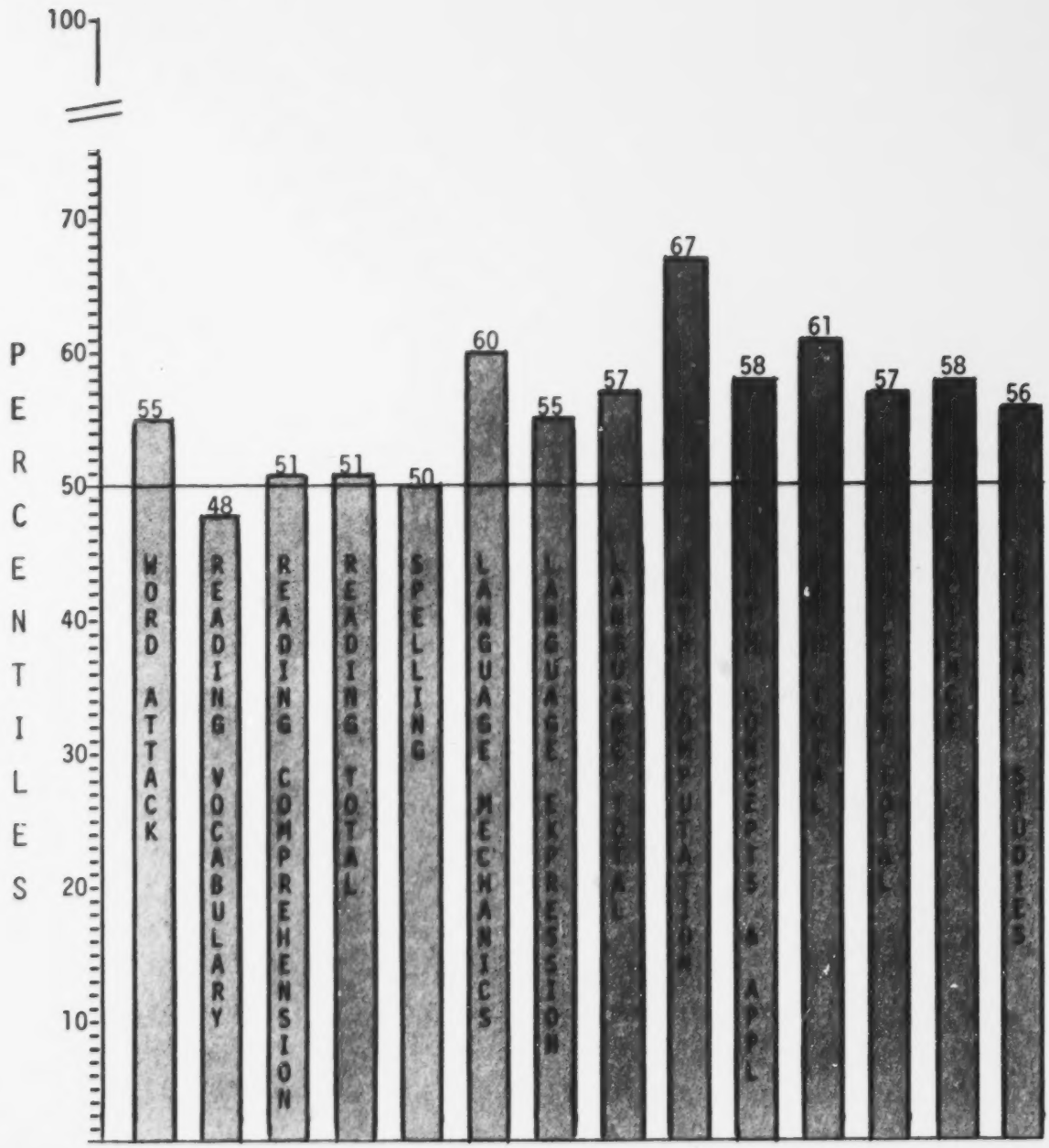
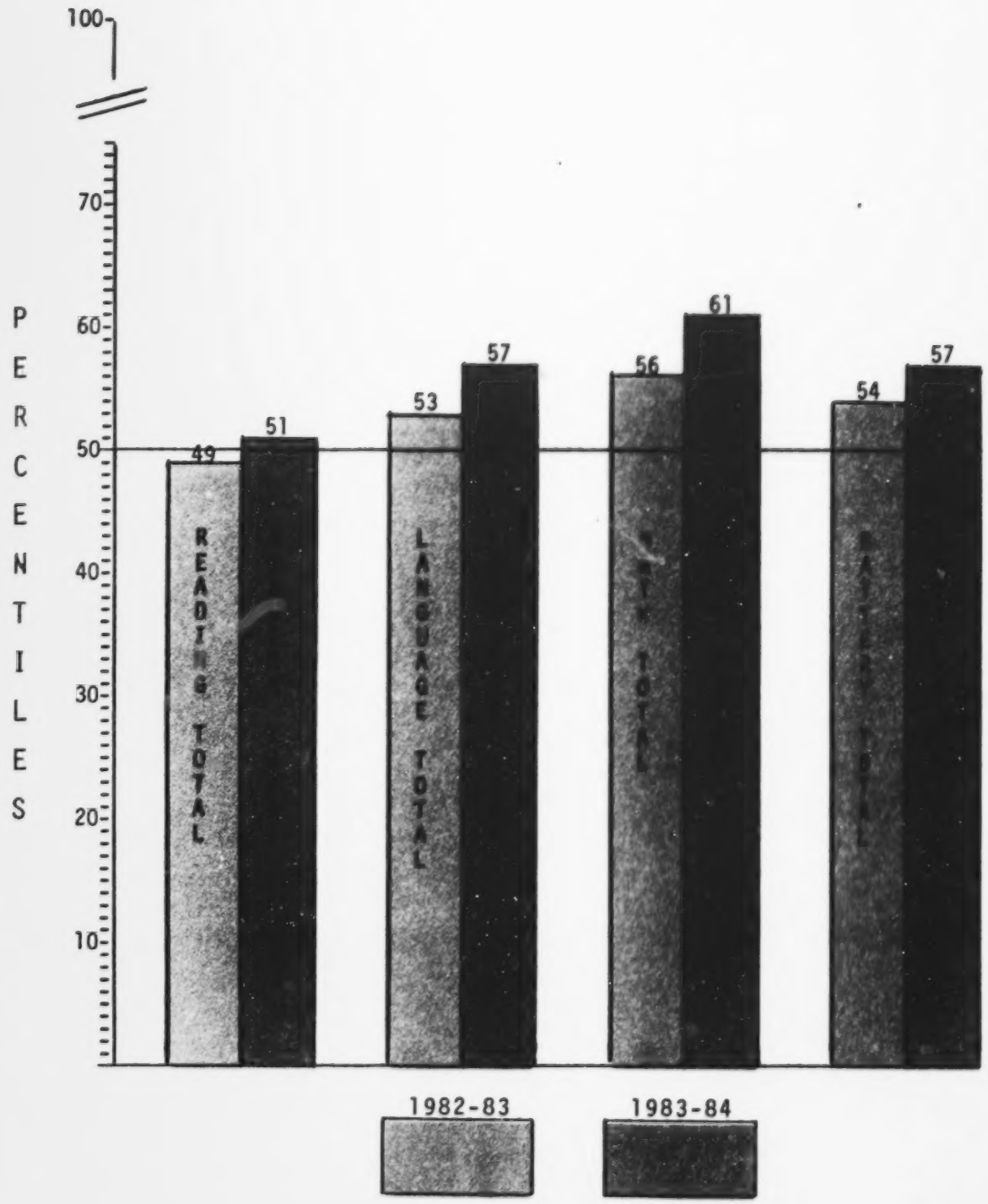


FIGURE: 2

THIRD GRADE CTBS FORM U SCORES NATIONAL PERCENTILES
BY YEAR (1982-83 TO 1983-84) FOR CONTENT AREAS AND BATTERY TOTALS



# FIFTH GRADE RESULTS

## FIFTH GRADE TESTING RESULTS

At the fifth grade level, 18,618 public school students were tested statewide using the CTBS Form U, Level G between March 13 and March 29, 1984. This form of the test contains the same test categories as the third grade Level E with the exception of the deletion of the Word Attack test and the inclusion of the Reference Skills test.

Test scores in percentile ranks are listed in Figure 3. The gray bars indicate scores in individual tests, while the red bars list reading, language, math, and battery totals.

On the average, New Mexico's fifth graders score above the national norm in all 14 testing categories. Scores ranged from the 51st percentile (spelling) to the 63rd percentile (math computation). As in grade 3, math (59th percentile) is the area where fifth grade New Mexico students scored highest compared to the national sample.

Scores for fifth graders in the content areas of reading, language, and math have been increasing over the past three years, as is indicated in Figure 4. Most notable are the gains in the language area, where scores have increased by seven percentile points since 1981-82 (from 49th to 56th percentile).

NOTE: Form U scores for 1981-82 were adjusted to be consistent with the scores produced by the scoring process used in 1982-83 and 1983-84.

FIGURE: 3
STATEWIDE 1983-84 FIFTH GRADE CTBS FORM U SCORES
EXPRESSED IN NATIONAL PERCENTILES

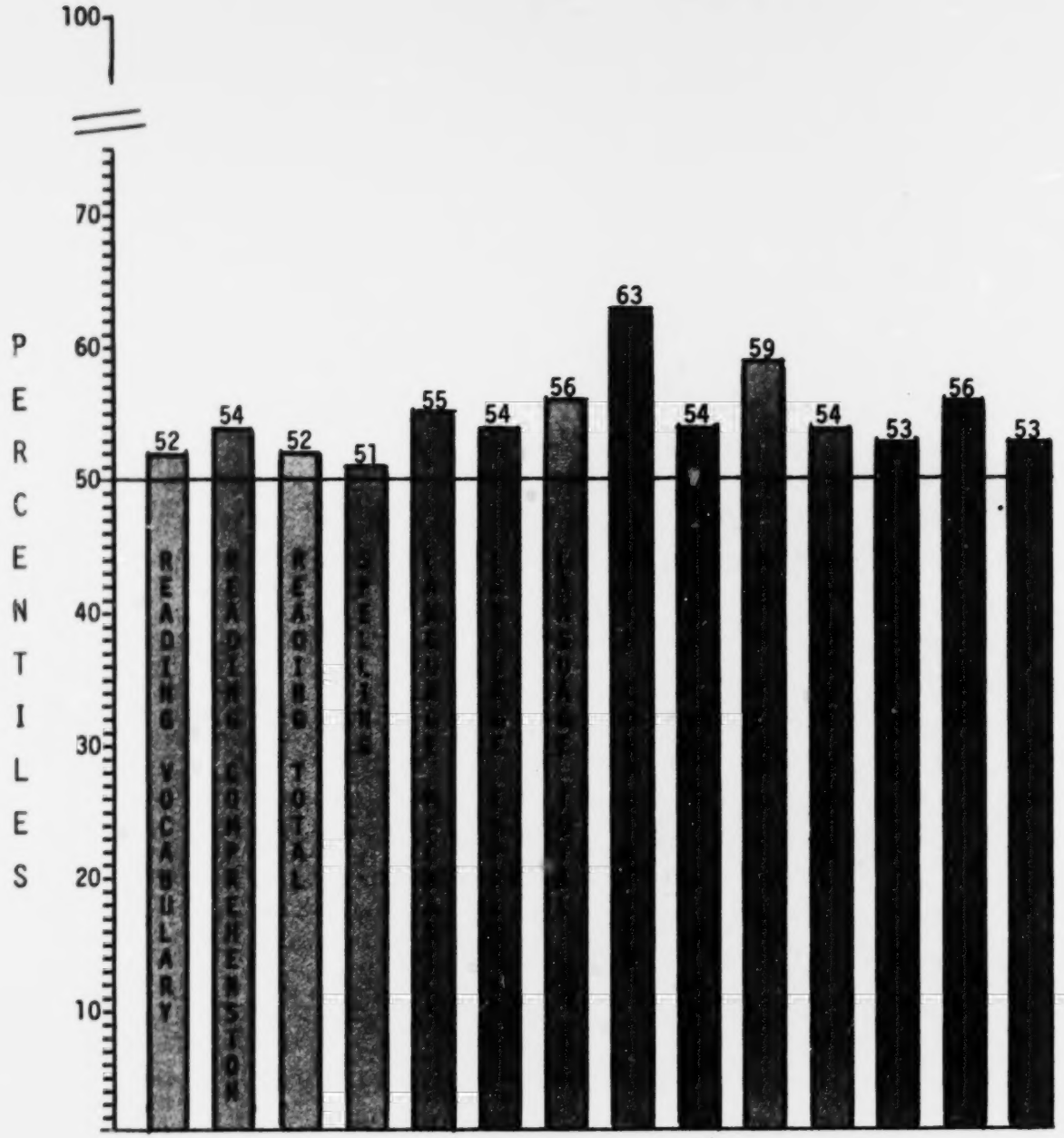
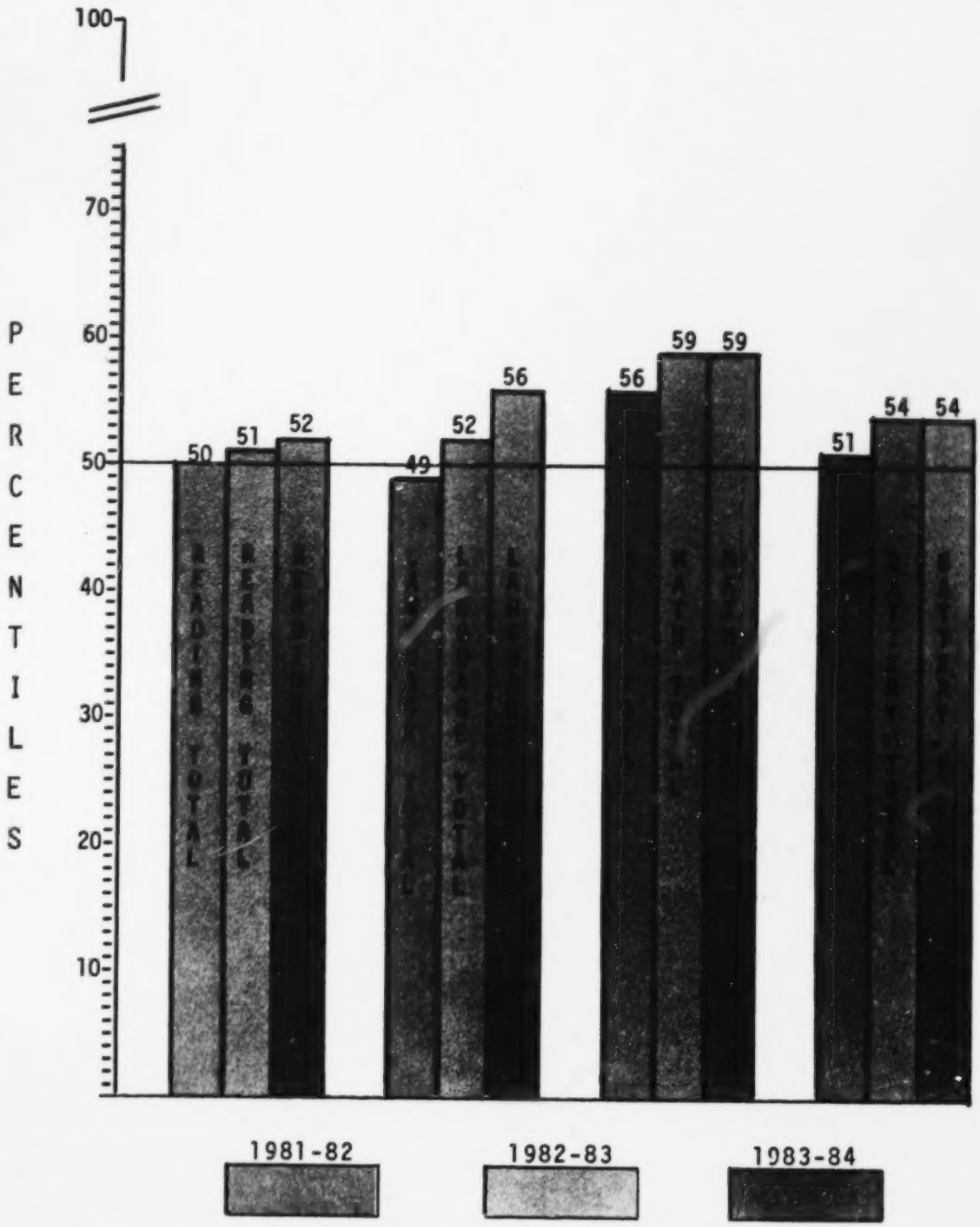


FIGURE: 4

FIFTH GRADE CTBS FORM U SCORES NATIONAL PERCENTILES
BY YEAR (1981-82 TO 1983-84) FOR CONTENT AREAS AND BATTERY TOTALS



## EIGHTH GRADE TESTING RESULTS

Between March 13 and March 29, 1984, a total of 18,536 public school students in grade 8 were tested using the CTBS Form U, Level H. This form of the test contains the same test categories as that used with the fifth graders.

Test scores in percentile rank are listed in Figure 5. The gray bars indicate scores in individual tests, while the red bars list reading, language, math, and battery totals.

Scores in all 14 test categories for eighth graders are above the national norms. Scores range from the 52nd percentile (reading vocabulary) to the 62nd percentile (language expression and social studies).

There has been an increase in the CTBS content area scores for New Mexico's eighth graders over the past three years. Figure 4 indicates that reading, language, math, and total battery percentile scores have climbed steadily since 1981-82.

NOTE: Form U scores for 1981-82 were adjusted to be consistent with the scores produced by the scoring process used in 1982-83 and 1983-84

FIGURE: 5
STATEWIDE 1983-84 EIGHTH GRADE CTBS FORM U SCORES
EXPRESSED IN NATIONAL PERCENTILES

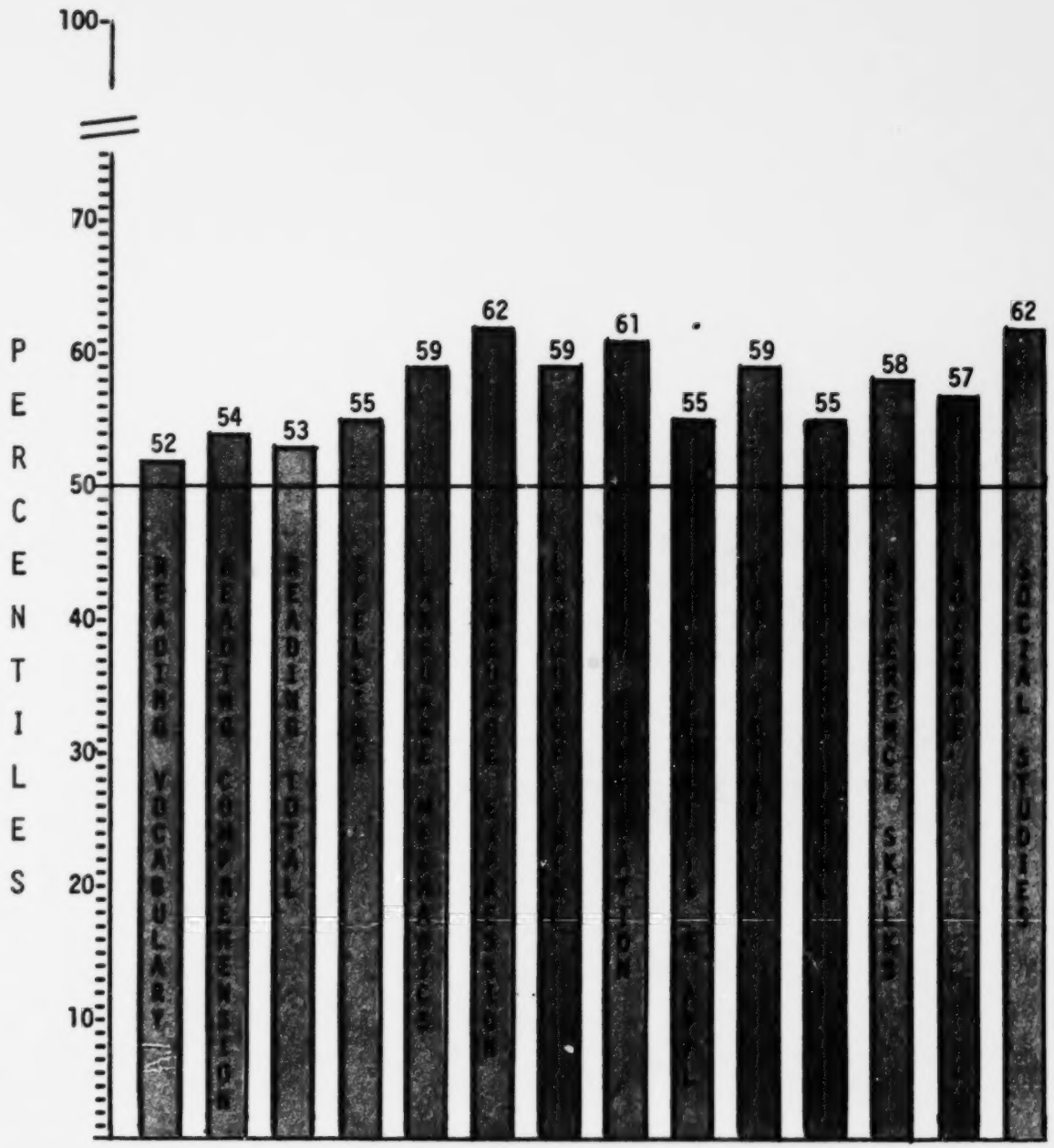
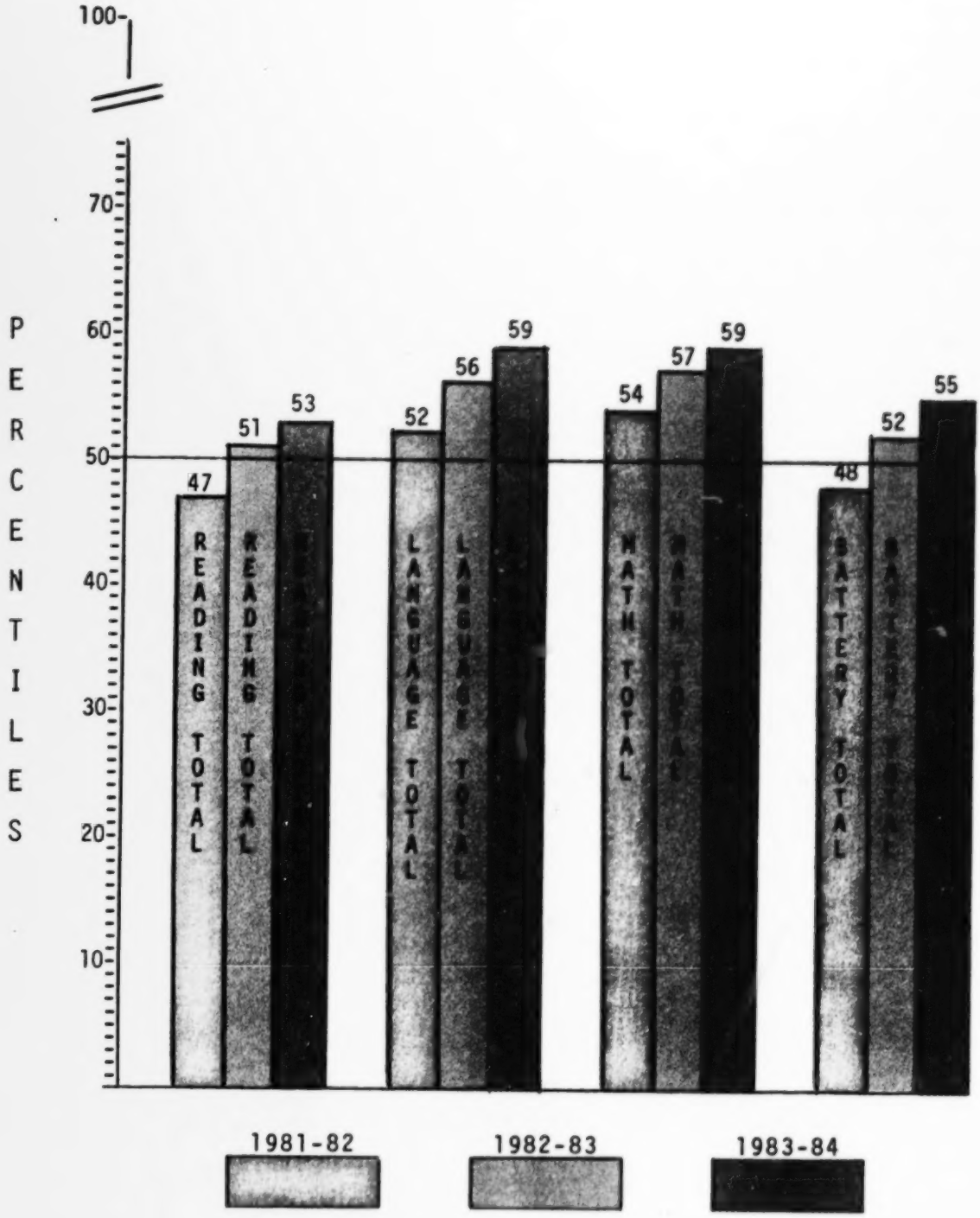


FIGURE: 6

EIGHTH GRADE CTBS FORM U SCORES NATIONAL PERCENTILES
BY YEAR (1981-82 TO 1983-84) FOR CONTENT AREAS AND BATTERY TOTALS



# APPENDICES

GRADE 3 STATEWIDE SUMMARY REPORTS - 1983-84
PERCENTILE RANK SCORES*

| CATEGORY | N** | WORD ATTACK | READING VOCAB | READING COMP | TOTAL READING | SPELLING | LANG MECH | LANG EXPR | TOTAL LANG | MATH COMP | MATH C & A | TOTAL MATH | TOTAL BATT | SCIENCE | SOCIAL STUDY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ALL Students | 18,617 | 55 | 48 | 51 | 51 | 50 | 60 | 55 | 57 | 67 | 58 | 61 | 57 | 58 | 56 |
| ETHNICITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anglo | 7,719 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 65 | 59 | 73 | 71 | 72 | 75 | 74 | 75 | 72 | 74 | 73 |
| Hispanic | 7,479 | 49 | 40 | 43 | 42 | 42 | 52 | 45 | 50 | 60 | 46 | 53 | 49 | 48 | 46 |
| Native Amer | 1,689 | 35 | 25 | 28 | 28 | 35 | 31 | 22 | 28 | 44 | 33 | 38 | 33 | 29 | 29 |
| Black | 395 | 47 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 45 | 52 | 42 | 48 | 56 | 41 | 47 | 46 | 48 | 44 |
| Asian Amer | 129 | 55 | 53 | 55 | 55 | 69 | 73 | 62 | 66 | 79 | 72 | 77 | 65 | 64 | 63 |
| Other | 133 | 59 | 58 | 58 | 58 | 58 | 64 | 69 | 67 | 75 | 67 | 72 | 65 | 60 | 70 |
| LANGUAGE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| English | 14,323 | 58 | 55 | 57 | 56 | 53 | 66 | 62 | 63 | 69 | 63 | 67 | 62 | 64 | 63 |
| Spanish | 2,341 | 41 | 31 | 34 | 34 | 35 | 40 | 31 | 38 | 55 | 37 | 44 | 40 | 35 | 33 |
| Indian | 742 | 28 | 19 | 23 | 22 | 28 | 23 | 18 | 21 | 34 | 27 | 32 | 26 | 22 | 23 |
| Other | 121 | 45 | 33 | 35 | 36 | 53 | 55 | 34 | 44 | 77 | 56 | 68 | 47 | 43 | 41 |
| BILINGUAL | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| None | 10,812 | 59 | 56 | 58 | 58 | 55 | 67 | 64 | 64 | 71 | 64 | 68 | 63 | 65 | 64 |
| This Year | 964 | 41 | 32 | 34 | 35 | 35 | 38 | 33 | 38 | 51 | 44 | 47 | 41 | 40 | 37 |
| 2 Years | 744 | 38 | 32 | 34 | 34 | 34 | 38 | 32 | 38 | 48 | 38 | 43 | 40 | 39 | 33 |
| 3 Years | 2,254 | 46 | 39 | 41 | 41 | 42 | 54 | 43 | 49 | 63 | 45 | 53 | 48 | 47 | 43 |
| Prior Years | 1,207 | 44 | 33 | 36 | 37 | 35 | 43 | 32 | 40 | 55 | 41 | 47 | 42 | 43 | 38 |

*Scores are National Percentile Conversions from Mean Scale Scores.
**N = Number of students with Total Battery Scores.

GRADE 5 STATEWIDE SUMMARY REPORTS - 1983-84
PERCENTILE RANK SCORES*

| CATEGORY | N** | READING VOCAB | READING COMP | TOTAL READING | SPELLING | LANG MECH | LANG EXPR | TOTAL LANG | MATH COMP | MATH C & A | TOTAL MATH | TOTAL BATT | REF SKILLS | SCIENCE | SOCIAL STUDY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ALL Students | 18,618 | 52 | 54 | 52 | 51 | 55 | 54 | 56 | 63 | 54 | 59 | 54 | 53 | 56 | 53 |
| ETHNICITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anglo | 7,815 | 69 | 68 | 70 | 59 | 68 | 68 | 71 | 72 | 65 | 71 | 70 | 69 | 72 | 69 |
| Hispanic | 7,913 | 41 | 45 | 43 | 45 | 47 | 46 | 47 | 61 | 47 | 55 | 45 | 44 | 46 | 45 |
| Native Amer | 1,690 | 24 | 31 | 29 | 36 | 37 | 27 | 33 | 50 | 34 | 42 | 31 | 34 | 34 | 31 |
| Black | 377 | 39 | 44 | 42 | 50 | 42 | 42 | 43 | 55 | 44 | 50 | 43 | 43 | 45 | 37 |
| Asian Amer | 131 | 54 | 57 | 55 | 65 | 69 | 55 | 63 | 87 | 69 | 81 | 63 | 70 | 62 | 63 |
| Other | 254 | 61 | 62 | 61 | 58 | 60 | 60 | 62 | 70 | 65 | 71 | 64 | 57 | 68 | 63 |
| LANGUAGE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| English | 14,510 | 58 | 60 | 59 | 54 | 60 | 59 | 61 | 67 | 58 | 63 | 61 | 60 | 62 | 60 |
| Spanish | 2,778 | 29 | 36 | 34 | 36 | 39 | 36 | 39 | 55 | 39 | 48 | 37 | 37 | 34 | 37 |
| Indian | 750 | 16 | 22 | 21 | 28 | 30 | 20 | 25 | 43 | 21 | 31 | 24 | 28 | 22 | 23 |
| Other | 118 | 33 | 43 | 39 | 51 | 53 | 38 | 46 | 70 | 54 | 61 | 44 | 49 | 46 | 44 |
| BILINGUAL | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| None | 12,172 | 56 | 59 | 57 | 54 | 60 | 58 | 60 | 67 | 58 | 63 | 60 | 60 | 61 | 58 |
| This Year | 585 | 38 | 42 | 40 | 37 | 40 | 39 | 41 | 55 | 43 | 50 | 41 | 41 | 42 | 38 |
| 2 Years | 660 | 29 | 35 | 34 | 33 | 39 | 33 | 37 | 55 | 38 | 47 | 35 | 36 | 33 | 36 |
| 3 Years | 1,860 | 39 | 44 | 42 | 45 | 49 | 45 | 47 | 61 | 46 | 55 | 45 | 45 | 46 | 46 |
| Prior Years | 2,115 | 41 | 47 | 44 | 46 | 47 | 45 | 46 | 61 | 48 | 55 | 46 | 43 | 48 | 46 |

*Scores are National Percentile Conversions from Mean Scale Scores.
**N = Number of students with Total Battery Scores.

GRADE 8 STATEWIDE SUMMARY REPORTS - 1983-84
PERCENTILE RANK SCORES*

| CATEGORY | N** | READING VOCAB | READING COMP | TOTAL READING | SPELLING | LANG MECH | LANG EXPR | TOTAL LANG | MATH COMP | MATH C & A | TOTAL MATH | TOTAL BATT | REF SKILLS | SCIENCE | SOCIAL STUDY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ALL Students | 18,536 | 52 | 54 | 53 | 55 | 59 | 62 | 59 | 61 | 55 | 59 | 55 | 58 | 57 | 62 |
| ETHNICITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anglo | 7,703 | 71 | 69 | 71 | 64 | 72 | 78 | 74 | 69 | 72 | 71 | 71 | 75 | 72 | 77 |
| Hispanic | 7,481 | 37 | 45 | 43 | 46 | 48 | 52 | 48 | 55 | 46 | 50 | 44 | 42 | 45 | 50 |
| Native Amer | 1,749 | 22 | 27 | 26 | 37 | 35 | 32 | 35 | 48 | 30 | 36 | 31 | 30 | 34 | 38 |
| Black | 378 | 39 | 45 | 43 | 49 | 42 | 51 | 45 | 51 | 41 | 44 | 42 | 38 | 41 | 47 |
| Asian Amer | 120 | 53 | 57 | 55 | 62 | 71 | 65 | 68 | 93 | 75 | 82 | 64 | 70 | 62 | 73 |
| Other | 646 | 58 | 58 | 58 | 56 | 64 | 65 | 64 | 66 | 68 | 67 | 61 | 66 | 62 | 66 |
| LANGUAGE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| English | 15,001 | 58 | 59 | 59 | 59 | 63 | 67 | 64 | 64 | 61 | 63 | 61 | 67 | 62 | 68 |
| Spanish | 2,256 | 24 | 31 | 29 | 32 | 34 | 38 | 36 | 48 | 33 | 37 | 33 | 29 | 33 | 38 |
| Indian | 701 | 16 | 18 | 18 | 26 | 29 | 24 | 29 | 37 | 19 | 27 | 24 | 24 | 26 | 30 |
| Other | 140 | 35 | 43 | 40 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 50 | 69 | 52 | 59 | 45 | 37 | 41 | 49 |
| BILINGUAL | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| None | 13,026 | 54 | 56 | 56 | 56 | 61 | 64 | 62 | 64 | 60 | 61 | 57 | 63 | 59 | 65 |
| This Year | 458 | 43 | 47 | 46 | 48 | 50 | 55 | 50 | 58 | 52 | 55 | 48 | 46 | 49 | 53 |
| 2 Years | 362 | 47 | 50 | 49 | 49 | 55 | 59 | 55 | 58 | 52 | 55 | 51 | 51 | 53 | 57 |
| 3 Years | 410 | 37 | 45 | 42 | 45 | 51 | 54 | 50 | 55 | 46 | 50 | 45 | 42 | 48 | 55 |
| Prior Years | 2,514 | 43 | 48 | 46 | 49 | 51 | 55 | 52 | 58 | 51 | 53 | 48 | 46 | 50 | 55 |

*Scores are National Percentile Conversions from Mean Scale Scores.
**N = Number of students with Total Battery Scores